

Washington, DC - Congressman John Adler announced today that New Jersey veterans will now be eligible to apply for a special emergency payment of their Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits. Veterans can apply online starting today or can request courtesy transportation to VA regional benefits offices for an on-the-spot payment.

"The brave men and women who served our country deserve quality, affordable education," said Congressman Adler, a member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee. "It's essential that our veterans receive the benefits they earned. It is frustrating that these payments have been delayed, and the VA must continue to take steps to quickly remedy this situation."

Last week, the VA announced that on Friday, October 2 their 57 regional benefits offices would provide on-the-spot emergency payments up to \$3,000 to students who have applied for their education benefits but who have not yet received a government payment.

Today, the VA made the process one step easier, by making it possible to apply online at www.va.gov. The online applicants will receive their emergency payments through the mail after processing.

Students without their own transportation can also request free van service, provided by volunteers, to carry them to the nearest benefits office. To obtain this service, veterans should call their nearest VA medical center and ask for the "Volunteer Transportation Coordinator." Transportation will be on a first-come, first-served, space-available basis.

The emergency checks are an advance on each student's education benefits, and the amount will be deducted from future benefits payments. Checks will be written at the regional offices for veterans who bring a photo ID and evidence of their enrollment. A \$3,000 payment is the maximum in emergency education benefits.

South Jersey residents can go to the VA Regional Benefits offices in Philadelphia or Newark. The most updated information regarding VA issuing emergency checks is available at the VA's Web site www.va.gov.